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Translation

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY
PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY
(Chapter II of the Patent Cooperation Treaty)

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 2891/18102 d/s	FOR FURTHER ACTION	
See Form PCT/IPEA/416		
International application No. PCT/EP2004/003085	International filing date (day/month/year) 24.03.2004	Priority date (day/month/year) 26.03.2003
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC		
Applicant UHDE GMBH		
<p>1. This report is the international preliminary examination report, established by this International Preliminary Examining Authority under Article 35 and transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of 4 sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p>3. This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, comprising:</p> <p>a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (<i>sent to the applicant and to the International Bureau</i>) a total of 6 sheets, as follows:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications authorized by this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> sheets which supersede earlier sheets, but which this Authority considers contain an amendment that goes beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed, as indicated in item 4 of Box No. I and the Supplemental Box.</p> <p>b. <input type="checkbox"/> (<i>sent to the International Bureau only</i>) a total of (indicate type and number of electronic carrier(s)) _____, containing a sequence listing and/or tables related thereto, in computer readable form only, as indicated in the Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing (see Section 802 of the Administrative Instructions).</p> <p>4. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. I Basis of the report</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. II Priority</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Box No. V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VI Certain documents cited</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application</p>		

Date of submission of the demand	Date of completion of this report
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/EP	Authorized officer
Facsimile No.	Telephone No.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.

PCT/EP2004/003085

Box No. I Basis of the report

1. With regard to the language, this report is based on the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

This report is based on translations from the original language into the following language _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of:

international search (Rule 12.3 and 23.1(b))
 publication of the international application (Rule 12.4)
 international preliminary examination (Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3)

2. With regard to the elements of the international application, this report is based on (replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report):

the international application as originally filed/furnished
 the description:

pages 2,3,6-8,10-13 as originally filed/furnished

pages* 1,4,5,9 received by this Authority on 29.10.2004 with letter of 28.10.2004

pages* _____ received by this Authority on _____

the claims:

nos. 2-7 as originally filed/furnished

nos.* _____ as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19 29.10.2004 with letter

nos.* 1 received by this Authority on of 28.10.2004

nos.* _____ received by this Authority on _____

the drawings:

sheets 1/2,2/2 as originally filed/furnished

sheets* _____ received by this Authority on _____

sheets* _____ received by this Authority on _____

a sequence listing and/or any related table(s) – see Supplemental Box Relating to Sequence Listing.

3. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

the description, pages _____
 the claims, nos. 3
 the drawings, sheets/figs _____
 the sequence listing (specify): _____
 any table(s) related to sequence listing (specify): _____

4. This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments annexed to this report and listed below had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).

the description, pages _____
 the claims, nos. _____
 the drawings, sheets/figs _____
 the sequence listing (specify): _____
 any table(s) related to sequence listing (specify): _____

* If item 4 applies, some or all of those sheets may be marked "superseded."

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.
PCT/EP2004/003085

Box No. V	Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
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1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims	1, 2, 4-7	YES
	Claims		NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims	1, 2, 4-7	YES
	Claims		NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims	1, 2, 4-7	YES
	Claims		NO

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7)

1. Reference is made to the following documents:

D1: US-A-5820837.

2. Document D1, considered to be the closest prior art, discloses (see column 3, line 66 to column 5, line 54; figure) a method for removing hydrogen sulphides and CO₂ from crude gases by means of two absorption steps (reference signs 12 and 23) and a desorption step (reference sign 28). Following a relieving step in a flash tank (reference sign 16), the charged absorbent from the first absorption step is preheated with the regenerated solution in a heat exchanger (reference sign 19) and then relieved in a further flash tank (reference sign 20). The gas flow from the second flash tank is cooled (reference sign 22) and, in the second desorption step, is further treated with regenerated absorbent. The charged absorbent from the second adsorption step is returned to the desorption step.

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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PATENTABILITY

International application No.
PCT/EP2004/003085

Box No. V

Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

The second flash tank (reference sign 20) in D1 does not operate at increased pressure and there is no third flash step for treating the charged absorbent from the second absorption step. The subject matter of claim 1 is therefore novel (PCT Article 33(2)).

3. Using the method described in claim 1, it is possible to obtain a particularly highly concentrated content of H₂S and CO₂ even with a reduced ratio of H₂O to CO₂ in the crude gas. In this way, the separation of CO₂ from H₂S is improved.

The subject matter of claim 1 is therefore considered to be inventive (PCT Article 33(3)).

4. Claims 2 and 4-7 are dependent on claim 1 and thus likewise satisfy the requirements of the PCT in respect of novelty and inventive step.